



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian
Northern District of New York

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CONTACT: Richard S. Hartunian or

John G. Duncan

(315) 448-0672

SYRACUSE AREA PHYSICIAN REQUIRED TO PAY CIVIL PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE FEDERAL CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT

Onondaga County physician settles for \$60,000.00

(Syracuse, New York)- United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian announced that in December of 2012, his office reached a civil settlement with Dr. William Beals, a Liverpool, New York physician, for \$60,000.00. The settlement agreement provided for payments over time and Dr. Beals made his final payment to the United States on January 11, 2013. As part of the settlement agreement, Dr. Beals also voluntarily surrendered his Drug Enforcement Administration number, which enables physicians to prescribe controlled substances. The settlement was in connection with violations of the Controlled Substances Act.

On February 1, 2012, DEA investigators conducted an inspection of Dr. Beals' office and subsequently questioned him about controlled substances he purchased between March 8, 2010 and January 25, 2012. According to the complaint filed in connection with the settlement, Dr. Beals had ordered approximately 5,000 Hydrocodone pills, a Schedule III controlled substance, and 1,100 Zolpidem pills, a Schedule IV controlled substance during this time period. Dr. Beals, however, not only was unable to provide purchase, dispensing, or destruction records for these drugs, he could not account for their whereabouts in any way.

The Controlled Substances Act was enacted to ensure that controlled substances are properly regulated and to help prevent drug diversion. To that end, practitioners who dispense

controlled substances are required to properly maintain complete and accurate inventories and records of all controlled substances that they purchase, receive, dispense, or destroy.

Prescription drug abuse is a significant nationwide issue. According to U.S. Attorney Richard S. Hartunian, his office takes drug diversion very seriously and will aggressively pursue those who violate the Controlled Substances Act, especially if they are professionals in the medical field. “It simply is unacceptable for medical professionals to act irresponsibly when handling controlled substances. The potential for these substances to end up in the wrong hands is something we are not willing to risk, and we will take whatever steps are necessary to prevent this from happening.”

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